

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-14 (Canceled).

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): A vehicular planetary gear type step-variable transmission comprising:

a first transmission portion and a second transmission portion which are disposed coaxially with a first axis, and wherein a rotary motion of an input rotary member rotated by a drive power source about the first axis is transmitted from said first transmission portion to said second transmission portion through a first intermediate output path, and a second intermediate output path a rotation motion of which is decelerated with respect to the rotary motion of said input rotary member at a speed ratio higher than that of said first intermediate output path, and a rotary motion of an output rotary member rotated about said first axis is transmitted to a drive wheel of a vehicle;

said first transmission portion including a first planetary gear set of a double-pinion type having a first carrier connected to said input rotary member and said first intermediate output path, a first ring gear connected to said second intermediate output path, and a first sun gear fixed to a stationary member;

said second transmission portion including a second planetary gear set of a single-pinion type having a second sun gear, a second carrier and a ~~third~~ second ring gear, and a third planetary gear set of a double-pinion type having a third sun gear, a third carrier and a third ring gear, said ~~first~~ second sun gear being selectively connected through a fourth clutch to said first intermediate output path, selectively connected through a third clutch to said

second intermediate output path, and selectively fixed through a first brake to said stationary member, said second carrier and said third carrier being constituted by a common member, selectively connected through a second clutch to said first intermediate output path, and selectively fixed through a second brake to said stationary member, said second ring gear and said third ring gear being constituted by a common member and fixed to said output rotary member, and said third sun gear being selectively connected through a first clutch to said second intermediate output path; and

a power transmitting member is disposed rotatably about a second axis parallel to said first axis and operatively connected to said output rotary member, for transmitting the rotary motion of said output rotary member to said drive wheel,

said vehicular planetary gear type step-variable transmission being installed on the vehicle such that said first axis and said second axis are parallel to a width direction of the vehicle.

**Claim 16 (Previously Presented):** The vehicular planetary gear type step-variable transmission according to claim 15, which has a plurality of gear positions selected from among:

a first gear position which is established by engaging said first clutch and said second brake or a one-way clutch and which has a highest speed ratio;

a second gear position which is established by engaging said first clutch and said first brake and which has a speed ratio lower than that of said first gear position;

a third gear position which is established by engaging said first clutch and said third clutch and which has a speed ratio lower than that of said second gear position;

a fourth gear position which is established by engaging said first clutch and said fourth clutch and which has a speed ratio lower than that of said third gear position;

a fifth gear position which is established by engaging said first clutch and said second clutch and which has a speed ratio lower than that of said fourth gear position;

a sixth gear position which is established by engaging said second clutch and said fourth clutch and which has a speed ratio lower than that of said fifth gear position;

a seventh gear position which is established by engaging said second clutch and said third clutch and which has a speed ratio lower than that of said sixth gear position; and

an eighth gear position which is established by engaging said second clutch and said first brake and which has a speed ratio lower than that of said seventh gear position.

Claim 17 (Currently Amended): A vehicular planetary gear type step-variable transmission comprising:

a first transmission portion and a second transmission portion which are disposed coaxially with a first axis, and wherein a rotary motion of an input rotary member rotated by a drive power source about the first axis is transmitted from said first transmission portion to said second transmission portion through a first intermediate output path, and a second intermediate output path a rotation motion of which is decelerated with respect to the rotary motion of said input rotary member at a speed ratio higher than that of said first intermediate output path, and a rotary motion of an output rotary member rotated about said first axis is transmitted to a drive wheel of a vehicle;

said first transmission portion including a first planetary gear set of a double-pinion type having a first carrier connected to said input rotary member and said first intermediate

output path, a first ring gear connected to said second intermediate output path, and a first sun gear fixed to a stationary member;

    said second transmission portion including a second planetary gear set and a third planetary gear set each of which has a sun gear, a carrier and a ring gear, and having ~~four rotary elements~~ a first rotary element, a second rotary element, a third rotary element, and a fourth rotary element, each of which is said first, second, third, and fourth rotary elements being provided by one member or a combination of a plurality of connected members selected from among said sun gears, said carriers and said ring gears of said second and third planetary gear sets, ~~said four rotary elements having respective rotating speeds that are represented along respective four straight lines in a collinear chart, which four straight lines are arranged in a direction from one of opposite ends of the collinear chart toward the other end~~, said first rotary element being selectively connected through a fourth clutch to said first intermediate output path selectively connected through a third clutch to said second intermediate output path, and selectively fixed through a first brake to said stationary member, said second rotary member being selectively connected through a second clutch to said first intermediate output path, and selectively fixed through a second brake to said stationary member, said third rotary element being fixed to said output rotary member, and said fourth rotary member being selectively connected through a first clutch to said second intermediate output path;

    a power transmitting member is disposed rotatably about a second axis parallel to said first axis and operatively connected to said output rotary member, for transmitting the rotary motion of said output rotary member to said drive wheel;

said vehicular planetary gear type step-variable transmission being installed on the vehicle such that said first axis and said second axis are parallel to a width direction of the vehicle;

    said first planetary gear set, said second planetary gear set and said third planetary gear set being disposed in this order of description, coaxially with said first axis; and

    said fourth clutch being disposed on one side of said first planetary gear set which is remote from said second planetary gear set, and being connected to said first carrier.

Claim 18 (Previously Presented): The vehicular planetary gear type step-variable transmission according to claim 17, further comprising an oil pump which is disposed on one side of said first planetary gear set that is remote from said second planetary gear set and which is rotated by said drive power source to supply a working fluid for engaging said clutches and said brakes, and wherein said fourth clutch is disposed in a space between said first planetary gear set and said oil pump.

Claim 19 (Previously Presented): The vehicular planetary gear type step-variable transmission according to claim 17, wherein said stationary member to which said first sun gear of said first planetary gear set is fixed has a cylindrical wall portion and is disposed coaxially with said input rotary member, and wherein said fourth clutch is disposed in a radially outer space within said cylindrical wall portion of said stationary member.

Claim 20 (Previously Presented): The vehicular planetary gear type step-variable transmission according to claim 16, wherein said fourth clutch includes friction members, and

a fourth clutch piston for forcing said friction members against each other to engage said fourth clutch, said fourth clutch piston is disposed on one side of said friction members which is remote from said first planetary gear set.

Claim 21 (Currently Amended): The vehicular planetary gear type step-variable transmission according to claim 18, wherein said fourth clutch includes friction members, and a fourth clutch piston for forcing said friction members against each other to engage said fourth clutch, and wherein said fourth clutch piston is disposed on one side of the friction members of said fourth clutch which is on the side of said oil pump.

Claim 22 (Currently Amended): The vehicular planetary gear type step-variable transmission according to claim 17, wherein said fourth clutch includes friction members, and a fourth clutch piston for forcing said friction members against each other to engage said fourth clutch, and wherein said fourth clutch piston partially defines a centrifugal-pressure compensating oil chamber for said fourth clutch piston, said centrifugal-pressure compensating oil chamber being formed radially inwardly of the friction members of said fourth clutch.

Claim 23 (Previously Presented): The vehicular planetary gear type step-variable transmission according to claim 17, wherein said third clutch has friction members disposed radially outwardly of said first ring gear, and a third clutch piston for forcing the friction members of said third clutch against each other to engage said third clutch, and said fourth clutch includes a fourth clutch cylinder disposed radially inwardly of a cylindrical portion of

said third clutch piston, an oil seal being provided between said third clutch piston and said fourth clutch cylinder.

**Claim 24 (Currently Amended):** The vehicular planetary gear type step-variable transmission according to claim [[17]] 23, wherein said third clutch further has a third clutch drum which cooperates with said third clutch piston to define therebetween an oil chamber for operating said third clutch piston.

**Claim 25 (Previously Presented):** The vehicular planetary gear type step-variable transmission according to claim 15, wherein said output rotary member is disposed coaxially of said first axis, between said first transmission portion and said second transmission portion.

**Claim 26 (Previously Presented):** The vehicular planetary gear type step-variable transmission according to claim 15, wherein said second planetary gear set and said third planetary gear set constitute a planetary gear train of Ravigneaux type.

**Claim 27 (Currently Amended):** The vehicular planetary gear type step-variable transmission according to claim 20, wherein said ~~fourth clutch has a~~ fourth clutch piston which partially defines an oil chamber for pressing said fourth clutch piston, said oil chamber being located radially inwardly of the friction members of said fourth clutch.

Claim 28 (Previously Presented): The vehicular planetary gear type step-variable transmission according to claim 22, further comprising a return spring seat which cooperates with said fourth clutch piston to define therebetween said centrifugal-pressure compensating oil chamber.

Claim 29 (Previously Presented): The vehicular planetary gear type step-variable transmission according to claim 22, further comprising an oil pump cover having an oil passage through which a working oil is discharged from said centrifugal-pressure compensating oil chamber.

Claim 30 (Currently Amended): The vehicular planetary gear type step-variable transmission according to claim [[15]] 17, wherein said output rotary member is disposed coaxially with said first axis, between said first transmission portion and said second transmission portion

Claim 31 (Currently Amended): The vehicular planetary gear type step-variable transmission according to claim [[15]] 17, wherein said second planetary gear set and said third planetary gear set constitute a planetary gear train of Ravigneaux type.

Claim 32 (Currently Amended): The vehicular planetary gear type step-variable transmission according to claim [[15]] 17, wherein said third planetary gear set is of a double-pinion type.

Claim 33 (Currently Amended): The vehicular planetary gear type step-variable transmission according claim [[15]] 17, wherein

    said second planetary gear set is a planetary gear set of a single-pinion type having a second sun gear, a second carrier and a second ring gear,

    said third planetary gear set ~~being~~ is a planetary gear set of a double-pinion type having a third sun gear, a third carrier and a third ring gear,

    said ~~first~~ second sun gear ~~being~~ is selectively connected through said fourth clutch to said first intermediate output path, selectively connected through said third clutch to said second intermediate output path, and selectively fixed through said first brake to said stationary member,

    said second carrier and said third carrier ~~being~~ are constituted by a common member, selectively connected through said second clutch to said first intermediate output path, and selectively fixed through said second brake to said stationary member,

    said second ring gear and said third ring gear ~~being~~ are constituted by a common member and fixed to said output rotary member, and

    said third sun gear ~~being~~ is selectively connected through said first clutch to said second intermediate output path.

Claim 34 (Currently Amended): The vehicular planetary gear type step-variable transmission according to claim [[14]] 17, which has a plurality of gear positions selected from among:

    a first gear position which is established by engaging said first clutch and said second brake or a one-way clutch and which has a highest speed ratio;

a second gear position which is established by engaging said first clutch and said first brake and which has a speed ratio lower than that of said first gear position;

a third gear position which is established by engaging said first clutch and said third clutch and which has a speed ratio lower than that of said second gear position;

a fourth gear position which is established by engaging said first clutch and said fourth clutch and which has a speed ratio lower than that of said third gear position;

a fifth gear position which is established by engaging said first clutch and said second clutch and which has a speed ratio lower than that of said fourth gear position;

a sixth gear position which is established by engaging said second clutch and said fourth clutch and which has a speed ratio lower than that of said fifth gear position;

a seventh gear position which is established by engaging said second clutch and said third clutch and which has a speed ratio lower than that of said sixth gear position; and

an eighth gear position which is established by engaging said second clutch and said first brake and which has a speed ratio lower than that of said seventh gear position.